



Press Release – For Immediate Release

“DO YOUR THING” CALIFORNIA: SAVE ENERGY ON ECLIPSE DAY AND EVERY DAY

Nearly 70 Leaders of Community and Business Organizations and 16 California Cities Have Joined the “Do Your Thing” Movement to Keep California No. 1 in Energy Efficiency

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., August 17, 2017 — The California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC) energy efficiency education program, Energy Upgrade California, will mark the coming together of communities and businesses throughout the state in an epic unifying experience – to witness the Great American Eclipse and collectively pledge to do their part to lower California’s electricity use on eclipse day, August 21, and every day.

“We lead the nation in energy efficiency, but we can all do more,” said CPUC President Michael Picker. “When the moon comes between the earth and the sun, we can all step in and do one simple thing to offset the loss of solar power to the grid. We can all power down, use our watts more wisely, and reduce the need for gas peaker plants by unplugging home electronics and chargers and shutting down power strips that aren’t in use.”

Consumers can take a pledge to do one thing for the sun during the eclipse at CalEclipse.org.

California has some of the most ambitious renewable energy goals in the nation, including reaching 33 percent renewable energy by 2020 and 50 percent by 2030. California currently generates nearly 10,000 megawatts of solar power, which can meet up to 40 percent of energy needs on some days.

The California Independent System Operator anticipates sufficient energy supplies and network reliability during the solar eclipse.

As California continues to increasingly turn to solar power, consumer action and conservation is anticipated to become an ever-increasingly important aspect of managing effective power supply when the sun’s rays are not shining – whether on cloudy days, evenings, or during a solar eclipse. Leading up to this solar eclipse, the CPUC is joining with leaders around California who are using the historic event as an opportunity to highlight California’s large and growing adoption of solar power – and the new opportunities for conservation this energy source presents.

“The solar eclipse reminds us how important solar energy has become to California,” said Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. “Conservation is key when the sun’s rays are taking a break.”

While some parts of the country will experience a total eclipse, California's view will be partially obscured from 76 percent in Northern California to 62 percent in Southern California from about 9:02 a.m. until approximately 11:54 a.m. California won't see another eclipse of this magnitude until 2045.

City and Community Leaders Join the Movement

California's cities, community organizations and businesses are also doing their part by becoming sun partners. Nearly 70 community and business organization leaders and 16 cities have stepped up since the "Do Your Thing" program launched in April, joining the Energy Upgrade California movement and committing to doing more to save energy.

To show his support, San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee will lead an eclipse viewing event at City Hall on the day of the eclipse day to encourage all San Franciscans to take an active role in meeting California's long-term energy goals.

"The City of San Francisco is proud of how energy efficient our residents are on a daily basis," said Mayor Lee. "Energy consciousness is woven into the fabric of our city, but there is always something more we can do in our daily routines to make an even bigger impact for our state. We have a responsibility as residents and business owners to start by unplugging our devices and getting outside to watch this amazing phenomenon."

Organizations such as Small Business Majority have joined because of the benefits it can bring to small business owners looking to go green while improving their bottom line. "Many small business owners struggle with expensive electricity bills. They want to invest in energy efficiency to increase savings, but they often don't know where to start. That's why we are pleased to support Energy Upgrade California, which helps small businesses across the state identify easy ways to increase their energy efficiency and save money on their bills," said Mark Herbert, California Director, Small Business Majority.

New Energy Behind Our Leadership Position

California is known for doing its thing when it comes to conservation and energy efficiency. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Californians' electricity consumption has remained flat during the past 40 years, while the other 49 states increased their average per capita energy use by more than 50 percent. California produces twice as much economic output for every kilowatt-hour consumed compared to the rest of the country.

The Natural Resources Defense Council estimates that California's increased energy efficiency has eliminated more than 30 million metric tons of CO₂ pollution, equal to the annual emissions of 6 million cars. The state also has created hundreds of thousands of energy efficiency jobs.

"We lead the nation in energy efficiency, but we can do more," added President Picker. "On eclipse day, to offset the loss of solar power to the grid, we can all see how easy it is to simply power down and use our watts more wisely."

How to Join Your Fellow Californians

Starting with simple actions can create sustained behavior changes over time:

- **Unplug “vampire” electronics.** These are things like coffee makers, televisions, computers, and gadgets that even when turned off, use energy. Nearly a quarter of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, the average U.S. household spends \$100 per year to power devices while they are off or in standby mode.
- **Upgrade to LED light bulbs.** If all Californians upgraded to LED light bulbs, the state could reduce CO₂ emissions equivalent to those produced by a coal-fired power plant in one year. LED light bulbs use at least 75 percent less energy than “old fashioned” incandescent bulbs and save \$70 annually.
- **Be mindful about time of use.** By using high energy consuming devices, such as dishwashers, air conditioners, and washing machines after 9 p.m., Californians may be able to reduce their energy bills. This also reduces the need to use the most expensive, carbon-intensive forms of power generation during peak demand times.

###

About Energy Upgrade California

Created by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in 2011 and funded through the landmark “Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015,” Energy Upgrade California is a statewide marketing, education, and outreach (ME&O) initiative to promote energy management concepts, energy efficiency actions, and clean energy opportunities for the state’s residents and businesses. Visit www.energyupgradeca.org to learn more.

About the California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC regulates privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies. The CPUC serves the public interest by protecting consumers and ensuring the provision of safe, reliable utility service and infrastructure at just and reasonable rates, with a commitment to environmental enhancement and a healthy California economy. Visit www.cpuc.ca.gov to learn more.

For more information, please contact:

Terrie Prosper, CPUC, 415-703-1366, news@cpuc.ca.gov

Vanessa Sapino, FleishmanHillard, 916-601-2116, Vanessa.Sapino@fleishman.com